



HS General Assembly - "Improving Upon Sustainability in Relation to Tourism"

“Sustainable tourism” is defined as “tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities”. The promotion of sustainable tourism falls under UN Sustainable Development Goal number eight. Tourism is a tool that is being used to promote the development of Small Island States as well as other developing states in terms of economics to fulfill SDG 14.

Tourism is one of the biggest industries in the world. In 2022, tourism contributed 7.7 trillion U.S. dollars to the global GDP and is estimated to reach 15.5 trillion U.S. dollars by 2033. Tourists help boost local and global economies but also create issues by using excessive energy and negatively affecting the environment. Tourism accounts for 8% of the world’s total carbon emissions, and plane travel alone accounts for 2% of total carbon emissions.

For many countries who depend on tourism but already have depleted natural resources, this is an impossible position. Unregulated tourism in natural areas can lead

to soil erosion, water pollution, and natural habitat loss. It can also put a strain on other resources, forcing local populations to compete for these necessities.

The construction of facilities to accommodate tourists can lead to deforestation, which depletes the earth's carbon sinks. Carbon sinks are areas that absorb and store carbon dioxide. Additionally, hotels and resorts often use vast amounts of energy for heating, cooling, and lighting and dispose of a considerable amount of food. The hotel industry produces over 289,700 tonnes of solid waste yearly, 79,000 tonnes of which is food waste.

With tourism being such an important part of many economies, creating sustainable tourism solutions must be financially feasible. Smaller and/or less developed states may have trouble implementing sustainable solutions due to cost or fear of profit lost. Member states such as Costa Rica have created sustainable tourism options that utilize local cultural practices to promote low-waste tourism. Small island states require solutions that also promote climate change resistance.

REFERENCES:

<https://sdgs.un.org/topics/sustainable-tourism#:~:text=The%20World%20Tourism%20Organization%20defines,the%20environment%20and%20host%20communities%22>.

[Environmental Impacts of Tourism](#)

[Carbon Footprint of Tourism](#)

[Tourism Contribution to Global GDP](#)